

MARCH 3rd

**DOUBLE
BIRTHDAY
NUMBER**

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CHALLENGE

BRITAIN'S
FIGHTING
YOUTH
WEEKLY
2^d

BIRTHDAY IN BATTLE

GREETINGS TO THE RED ARMY ON ITS 27th BIRTHDAY!

There were few in 1918 who would have dared to foretell that in less than a generation the ragged bands of soldiers and workers who formed the Red Guards would have grown into the mightiest army the world has ever seen, looked upon by hundreds of millions as their saviour.

The inspiration of Socialism, the knowledge that it represented the only way forward for the working masses of the world, is the guiding star of the Red Army. The realisation that they would not be left in peace to build and enjoy Socialism in their own land, that one day an attack must come, led the peoples of the Soviet Union to cherish their Red Army, to deny it nothing, whatever sacrifices were entailed.

The war of the Nazis against civilisation steeled the Red Army. The struggle has been its finest school. The necessity

to overcome incredible obstacles and the fight to do so has created the power and the ability to overcome every difficulty.

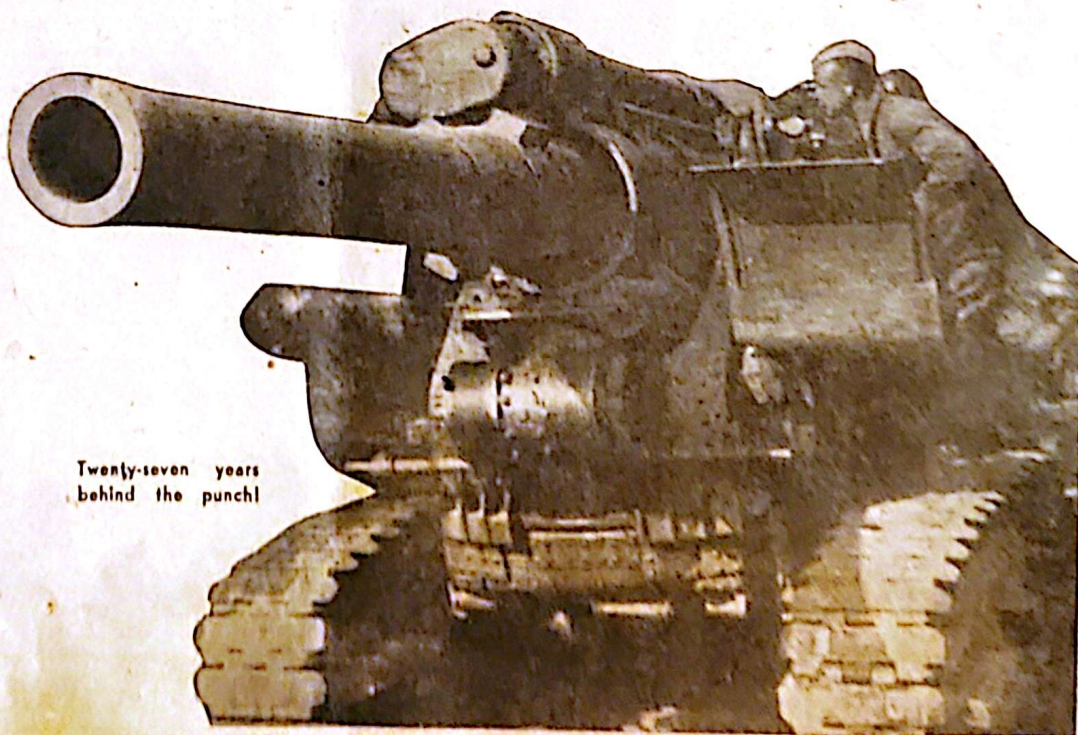
So that today the Red Army crashes on towards the heart of the Reich, and whole nations

watch and hope day by day as it nears the climax of the struggle.

The Red Army does not fight alone for the people, as it did once. The vast forces of Britain, the United States and other

countries fight with those of the Soviet Union. Their unity in inflicting the final blows has been decided at the Black Sea Conference. That unity must be preserved among the people and continued to guarantee peace, a just peace, a peace which will bring a future of rich promise for the millions of the working class in every land.

We send our thanks to the men and women of all the forces of the United Nations, to them and especially to the men and women of the Red Army who have borne the heaviest burden, made the greatest sacrifice, we pledge that what they have done shall not be in vain.



Twenty-seven years
behind the punch!

BEFORE the war, British documentary films led the world. Few were aware of it, and it took the war to make the public really "documentary conscious."

Pre-war, such companies as Paul Rotha, Strand Films, the G.P.O. Film Unit, were turning out some excellent shorts. "Green Girdle," a film of London's "green belt," made by Strand Films, I remember as being an outstanding example.

Apart from the films they made for the British Council, which were mainly for showing abroad to put Britain on the map, documentaries were of little propaganda value. Then with the war they were assigned by the Government to make propaganda films and at

last they really had something to get their teeth into.

The G.P.O. Unit became the famous Crown Film Unit, and then an endless list of fine films were produced, headed by "Target for Tonight," "Desert Victory," "Fires Were Started," "San Demetrio," and "Budge" Cooper, was there Crown's latest, "Western Approaches."

Many new companies have sprung up since the war and firmly established themselves, among them Data Films. This company, made up of young, keen technicians, has just completed shooting a film for the

★ SPOTLIGHT ★

"His Actors, Real People"

Ministry of Information. Its subject is Infant Mortality in Scotland. Its by the M.O.I., and then directed the picture in three weeks! She is now cutting it!

That's how documentary film technicians work. Nearly everyone does at least two jobs. Most documentary film directors write their own scripts.

Much praise is given by the public to British documentaries these days, and that praise is richly deserved, but what about the non-theatrical documentaries which the public never sees?

I mean the countless training films made for the Army, Navy and Air Force. These are doing a real war job, with not even a "thank you."

Every conceivable subject is dealt with to assist the Service man and woman—from how to darn an Army sock to invasion tactics; from how to cook in the field to the treatment of war neuroses.

The other Services—N.F.S., W.V.S., A.R.P., etc., have their training films too. "The Fire

Guard Plan," made by Verity Films, put before the A.R.P. authorities a concise and efficient scheme for getting personnel quickly on the spot to cope with incendiary fires.

These "back-room" films are extremely well-made. Not "thrown together" as one would imagine, but carefully directed and photographed. They are there to make the Service man and woman sit up, for once he or she loses interest, the lesson is lost.

There is no doubt about it, the documentary film technician is in the business for the love of it, for he gives far more than he takes.

His pay is about a third of that of the full-length feature film technician, although the job is the same!

He works long hours, is out in all weathers, will go to any lengths to get what he considers to be a good or unusual shot (see Western Approaches).

He's out for realism every time—his actors, real people: his studio, the world!

Yes, during this war, some very hard work has gone into the making of our documentary films. Let us hope that after the war and the renewal of peace-time production, there will be an automatic switchover from propaganda to education, for film is the finest educational medium there has ever been.



Adrift at sea—a scene from "Western Approaches," which was made without a single professional actor. The whole cast was drawn from men "on the job."

"O.K. chum, the game's up." As everyone knows, that's the classical answer of every crook when the police nab him.

It seems that the Nazi gangsters have other ideas. Information reaching me from Tass in Geneva shows that already an intensive campaign in Germany has begun. Its object is to convince the German people that defeat in the present war is only a setback, that the German will to institute the Nazi order cannot be broken and that "the struggle must be continued for the sake of future victory."

What do the Nazis hope to achieve by this kind of propaganda?

Their main objects are twofold, I believe, to create leaders for perpetual resistance against the Allied occupation of Germany,

and to produce leaders for the continuance of the Nazi party, which will eventually begin the struggle all over again.

And they don't mind waiting. It's interesting to note that this propaganda is being carried out mainly in the schools and in special classes for the Hitler Youth.

A clear indication that we must have plans for the re-education of German youth if we are ever to restore Germany to a place among the civilised nations.

I DOUBT if many readers will be overcome with joy at the "Daily Telegraph's" revelations that William Randolph Hearst has

restored his fortunes.

Our main interest in Hearst is that he controls a string of papers throughout the U.S.A., which are anti-Soviet, and generally reactionary.

They supported Mikhailovitch against Tito, for example, and at one period did not seem averse

from a home-grown American brand of Fascism.

Hearst's amazing fortune, which included control of a good deal of property and land in New York, "collapsed" a year or two before the war.

It had brought him incredible wealth, which he used, among other things, to amass an art col-

lection worth £9,000,000, and the fabulous palace of San Simeon in California (original of "Xanadu" in the film, "Citizen Kane," which was in part founded on Hearst's life).

The poor old boy, now 81, had to cut his personal salary to £25,000 a year while re-organising his affairs. Maybe it's a pity Hearst doesn't control any papers over here: they might have supported the demand for increased old-age pensions.

THE Polish patriot, Cadet Officer Swalbe has asked me to correct two statements I made. He did not fight at Warsaw in 1939, but at Janow, which is near the Polish capital. He did not fight in France, but was an instructor in a training school there. Sorry, Cadet Officer Swalbe.

Larry Keen

TWO WORLDS IN CHINA



THE house I lived in was one of four, a block which we called Buckingham Palace, for its big stone walls were set plumb in the centre of Hankow's riverbank slums and were, by contrast, indeed a palace.

The slums—a few wooden plank buildings and millions of lean-tos, made of matting, much like a tougher version of the stuff fish-bags are made from in this country, leaned against our garden walls, skidded down to the edge of the muddy river and sprawled away across miles of swamp and muck to the good solid stone places where the rest of us foreigners lived, the foreign concessions.

There was one particular road, a long, straight, wide one called the Ma Lo, which ran, a little above the level of the slums, like a dyke wall to the concessions; and all along one side of this, matting was stacked and laid out into the distance in waves, a whole ocean of it.

It was as if a kid had got hold of dozens of packs of cards and had started laying them together, each card here a piece of matting.

Sometimes a fire would catch in one of these hovels, and the whole Ma Lo would be lined by fire, and the tenants would burn there rather than leave the matting, their only property.

But others had been more fortunate, perhaps. We could see them from the back windows of Buckingham Palace. They had managed to buy

boats, all sizes from sampan (a narrow rowing boat) to junks.

And over all of these a piece of matting was hooped to form a shelter where the owners and their families slept and ate while they were not fishing or ferrying for their lives.

I can remember one winter now. It had been cold, so cold that the river froze in waves one night, freezing the boats to a standstill.

When the thaw started, I was standing at a window with my brother, listening to the great "booms" as the ice cracked, and watching the great black splits in it.

Then the ice began to move, bergs of it breaking apart, squeezing against the boats, pushing and roaring.

We thought it fun. I remember watching a boat crushed between two blocks, pushed under, the mast going down slowly out of sight or snapping off and lying on the floe.

Fun, until we saw that families were running to each boat, climbing in, being pushed down, going down under with the only property they had.

Over the other side of the river there were miles of paddy fields.

First, these would look like endless squares of a reservoir; and later, you could see the lines of bent-up farmers wading across them, pushing clumps

of young rice down through the water in straight lines across each field; and then, finally, the rice would grow up, changing all the country for miles to a bright jade green.

"The Troubles"

THERE were other things I remember too.

The maze of narrow streets in the native city, cluttered with rickshaws, shops that spilt themselves out into the thoroughfare, the laughing faces of working people who were dressed in blue cotton, and an occasional rich man wearing a silk gown with elaborate embroidery on its back.

Driving through these narrow streets in a rickshaw, I can remember a Ford motor coming out of a side street at us with gunmen firing a way through all this confusion and traffic from the running boards.

This often happened in 1927 and 1928: it may have been war-lords or bandits or revolutionaries: we heard a great deal about all three, the bandits often being referred to as "the reds" and the incident, whenever it happened, as "the troubles again."

In the summer, nearly all foreigners and many of the wealthier Chinese left Hankow for the mountains, as even the

native population could not stand the terrific damp heat and the typhus and cholera that went with it in the valleys.

The mountain village we went to was called Kuling. Chiang Kai-Shek used to go there too until the Japanese captured the place.

There were beautiful pagodas in the tall mountains; and steep rushing rivers with rock pools where we bathed; and coolies carrying loads of charcoal; and a copper mine not far from us; and a permanent fear that if we went far from home alone we would be caught by bandits; and black gorges, hundreds of feet deep, sheer walls of rock for their sides and square-sailed junks sailing along the bottoms.

Some of the older people were caught by bandits, were held to ransom and then went free again.

These bandits, too, were sometimes called "the reds" and such times "the troubles."

It wasn't until I was back in England that I began to discover why it was that people lived in places that burned them or drowned them, or shot them, or how the expensive, lovely embroidery on the rich man's gown and those fine pagodas could exist at the side of such squalor, or why people like us went to live in a country that might hold us to ransom.

If there was such poverty and unemployment on one side

You have asked to know more about China. DAVID BULLETT, who spent his early life in Hankow, tells you something of the background of the problem in the first of three articles.

of the world, how could there be peace and plenty in England on this side? If the chaos I had seen in China only just existed, how could an effective anti-fascist resistance be organised?

If there was no real national Chinese resistance, didn't it mean that Englishmen and Americans would be killed fighting Japan in China? So, as well as looking for reasons for the chaos, I had to find how order could be made out of it, and then how resistance could be organised out of the order.

Quiz

1. Give middle names of each of Big Three.
2. Name the four leading Trade Unionists attending World Conference from Latin America, India, U.S.A., and U.S.S.R.
3. Where and what is Yenan?
4. Who was Editor of "The Poor Man's Guardian"?
5. What new bill has just been piloted through Parliament by Ernest Bevin, and what does it enact?
6. Who was first British Labour Prime Minister and in what year?
7. Who won the F.A. Cup in 1939, against whom, and what was the score?
8. Name well known British cricketer who became a Hollywood film star.

ANSWERS

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2. MacDonald, 3. N.W. China,
4. Kulezov, 5. N.W. China,
6. MacDonald, 7. 2, 1-0,
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ON a hillside, somewhere in the heart of France, lie the graves of seven men. Although many kilometres from any village or town the graves are well kept. The children and adults come continuously from all over the countryside to bring flowers and to ensure that no weeds infect those seven plots.

These are the graves of the members of a British Bomber Crew who were shot down over this spot more than a year ago.

Their mission was not one of bombers. They were members of one of the "hush-hush" squadrons of Bomber Command. They were carrying supplies to the men and women of the Maquis: their graves are on the spot where they were to have delivered those supplies. On that fateful night a Focke Wulf dived on them out of the darkness. That was one cargo that never got through. Behind that, and hundreds more missions

like it, is a long story of work and organisation.

I joined one of these squadrons early in 1944. On my first day I was warned of the secrecy of the work, and I, together with members of my crew, were told to keep "our lips sealed."

Our tactics were the opposite to those used by "Bomber Command." Where they flew on dark nights and in one main stream, we flew during the moon period, and alone.

We had a regular routine. "Ops Gen" came out in the morning. About eleven o'clock we were told

TO THE MEN OF THE MAQUIS

we were "ON" that night and we were then given the number of our aircraft. It was then that I (being the flight engineer) and the gunner got busy. The A.G. to check his guns and the F.E. to run up carefully each engine in turn, checking all oil, hydraulic and pneumatic circuits, carefully going over all electrical and safety equipment. The latter would be re-checked later by each member of the crew.

At 3.30 we used to attend briefing. There, Army Intelligence Officers, men who had recently returned from their enemy-occupied Europe, would tell the intricate details of the surrounding country. Heights of hills, peculiarities of woods, lakes and villages. Also what target to expect.

It was only on rare occasions we were told what we were carrying. I guess it's better to think you're carrying food and clothing, instead of a bomb-bay full of T.N.T. for use in French (and other) factories.

From then to near take-off time sleep was indicated. Then, after our bacon and egg supper, transport would rapidly take us to the crew-room to don our warm flying

clothes, collect our gum and coffee flasks, then once again transport would rapidly take us to our aircraft.

And so, as dusk was falling, our aircraft used to plough alone, away across England to the coast. There we could proceed low over the sea till arriving off the French Coast, then a steep climb and a dive over the coast, and again across Europe at two or three hundred feet.

It was inspiring, because down below the French people could see us, silhouetted against a bright moon-like sky, and they flashed V for victory on work benches, or brought the curtains of their houses back and forth to signal three dots and a dash.

Right across Europe our Bombardier and Navigator would check and re-check our course. The Bombardier visually by his maps; the Navigator from his instruments. All the while our eyes would stare into the night looking for aircraft, because if the Hun sees you first "You've had it!"

After hours of flying we would eventually reach the target area, then the methodical search, field by field for the target.

Then, suddenly, out of the darkness would come a flashing, certain pre-arranged signal, and then the target would quietly light up.

A few lights in the dark, and we would know that our journey

had not been in vain, that the men of the Maquis were down there, eagerly awaiting our cargo.

We would then, once, make a careful run of the lights and tensely await the B.A. "Load Gone." The skipper would say "Bomb's dropping. What's the course home, Navigator?" And we would breathe a sigh of relief and reach the coffee flask. That's half the job done, now to base and build up so all the way home.

When we landed, legs and arms aching, eyes as red as hell, due to seven hours of continuous

staring into blackness, after changing back into camp clothes, we would go into interrogation.

There we would impart all the intricate details of the trip. If the target was in the right place (very important), if we encountered any flack or enemy fighters, and always, "Well, what was the Met (weather) like?" After interrogation it was bed. Solid sleep for seven hours, into early afternoon.

It was not always that we carried arms and ammunition. There were occasions when we carried humans. Frenchmen, who were jumping back into their own land to fight the Boche.

I will never forget those men and women as long as I live. Quiet, unassuming, with an abso-

lute hate for everything that has a tinge of Fascism about it.

They were fully aware that if the Gestapo capture the secrets of the air-to-ground meeting then even if the aircraft managed to escape nothing but the firing squad—or even worse—awaits them.

But they never faltered, never a second's hesitation, and I'll always remember them jumping with a smile on their faces.

But the greatest personal thrill is, on the return journey to see the French Coast slip away beneath and to see the thin white line on the horizon, which means—England, home, base and bed.

Flight Engineer

"Give me the chance— I'LL LIVE IN THE AIR!"

"THEY get much chance of flying, do you stay in the A.T.C.?" I asked lads of an A.T.C. Wing. Those numbers have dropped from near a thousand to about one hundred of that strength.

They were a real representative bunch—stupid types, keen types, sporting types, all mixed up together.

"There's no thrill," offered one lad. "Grossly round." "There's the fellow," said another, more serious.

"There's more R.A.F. or Fleet Air Arm openings," said one hopeful.

"We get evening classes for nothing," said a practical type. Loud laughter for this sally.

The general opinion of all types seemed to be that those who dropped out now were mugs. Whether, as one lad put it, chaps now flying in the R.A.F. will want to marry and settle down once the war is ended, or whether they will find Civil Aviation routine too monotonous—like taxi-driving, somebody said—there seems to be a feeling that there will be more chances of flying for those who are keen on it.

The odds, however, seem to be

high enough to have discouraged all but a quarter of those previously joining the A.T.C.

One lad who spoke said he wasn't keen on flying at all. Just interested, that's all. Queer type this, the rest thought. He was interested in the science and mechanics of the job.

An Neville Wright to be, perhaps, but the sort of person that the A.T.C. of the future must cater for.

"Flying clubs for all, at weekends," I put forward the CHALLENGE plan. "A good idea," was

A.T.C.

FOR THE FEW OR FOR ALL?

FOUR weeks ago, soon after the CHALLENGE article on the future of the A.T.C., Air Marshal Sir Leslie Gossage, the Air Cadets' chief, made a statement. It took the form of an interview with a representative of the "London Star." Although it received little publicity outside that paper, it apparently represents the official attitude.

What are the main points of the statement?

1. That the A.T.C. has suffered little from the decision to stop all but a few recruits for the R.A.F.

2. That A.T.C. training is invaluable for the army.

3. There is a rosy future for the A.T.C. It will be the main peacetime source of recruits for the R.A.F. and F.A.A. There will be more practical training at R.A.F. stations, and more glider training. The A.T.C. "will get the best instructors and the best equipment."

4. "Recruits to the A.T.C. would probably have to give an undertaking to join the R.A.F., but if a boy wanted to back out of his undertaking there would be no forcing him to stick to it."

That sounds pretty promising. A CHALLENGE representative visited the Air Ministry to obtain further details.

To be frank, the attitude he found seemed to indicate that there is no real intention of facing up to what needs to be done.

The idea that A.T.C. training is invaluable for army recruits is no doubt correct. But why should the A.T.C. do the work of Army Cadet Units?

There was the feeling that after the war the A.T.C. will shrink in numbers. The suggestion was made that the Government intends to economise on the cadets after the war.

Taking this with the statements of Sir Leslie Gossage, we infer that the size of the A.T.C. will be restricted to the requirements of the R.A.F. and the Fleet Air Arm.

It isn't good enough. What is needed from the Air Ministry is the direct promise that British youth will be given the chance to fly which it demands.

We welcome the promise of more flying, gliding, instructors and equipment.

But they must be available to all who want and need them, not to the select few.

Our country is wealthy enough to do it. It could find the way to train hundreds of thousands of recruits to the R.A.F. in wartime. The services and lives of British youth have been given freely and without question.

It is not much to ask that when peace returns British lads should be given the chance to fly, whether there is a career for them in the air or not.

The Soviet Union had hundreds of sky clubs where all youth could learn to fly and take their share in their country's defence. We can do the same.

The chance to fly should be the opportunity of every British youth. But we shall have to fight for it. Every A.T.C. lad, everyone who has the interests of youth at heart, should take part in the fight.

Ask your M.P. and your prospective candidates, how they stand on this question.

Ask the Mayor and prominent local people who are responsible for the local units.

We have to win allies in this fight. Nothing ever came by waiting for it. CHALLENGE will do its part; without you it can do nothing.

"It ought to be possible to obtain A and B pilot's certificates at much cheaper rates," said one boy. "Civil Aviation should be run by the State with proper State flying schools."

These lads looked forward to having cheaper aircraft. One of them summed it up for all when he said: "Give me the chance and I'd live in the air."

C. MATTHEWS



There's was a different job. "I guess it's better to think you're carrying food and clothing."

DEAR READERS,

Among this week's Fund mail was a letter from a reader who has supported CHALLENGE since the first issue was printed in 1935, and as it was a greeting for our paper's 10th Birthday—the first one we've received—I'm sure you'll enjoy reading it, and feel as proud as we did.

"Our paper will be 10 years old in March. I remember the very first issue—the month of excitement beforehand, preparing to launch this glorious venture—a real live fighting youth paper."

"In these ten years we haven't done so badly, in fact, we've done damn well. First every time with youth news, we've pushed a punch in every issue."

"So here's a hush for every year we've kept going. I wish it would be more. It's so little for what CHALLENGE has meant to us, but

that's the way we've kept going—on the hush of our readers."

"Happy Birthday, CHALLENGE!"

IRINE.

How true! The success of CHALLENGE reaching the grand old age of 10 is an achievement which all readers of CHALLENGE have made possible.

1945 will be a stepping-stone, for bigger jobs are ahead for our paper. It's up to everyone of us to make sure CHALLENGE keeps going. We cannot keep the paper at its 10th Birthday for ever.

If you recognise the terrific job that CHALLENGE has done in that time, you will agree that your paper is worthy of a special birthday present. Irine has set the pace. We want hundreds of you to say "thanks" to CHALLENGE in the same way.

Her slogan is: "One shilling for every year." Make that your slogan too. JEAN.

fingertip FACTS

THIS WEEK: THE RED ARMY

ORIGIN. At the time of the revolution in Russia in November, 1917, the old Czarist forces collapsed and factory councils and trades unions organised armed detachments of workers which became known as "Red Guards." These were formally constituted by the Soviet Government in January, 1918, as the "Red Army."

The army scored its first success at Narva, near Leningrad, on February 23, 1918, and this is regarded as the Red Army's official birthday.

CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION. The Soviet Socialist Constitution adopted in 1936 declares: "Universal military service is a law."

"Military service in the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army is an honourable duty of the citizens of the U.S.S.R." (Article 132.)

"To defend the fatherland is up each year (about 14 the sacred duty of every million); consequently it was

citizen of the U.S.S.R. Treason to the country—violation of the oath, desertion to the enemy, impairing the military power of the State, espionage—is punishable with all the severity of the law as the worst of crimes." (Article 133.)

WHO SERVES. Conscription in peacetime began at the age of 19, and service lasted two years. Exemptions were granted for health reasons, sometimes for secondary school students, for only sons or breadwinners, for boys undergoing technical training. Of those liable, only about 70 per cent were called up each year (about 14 million); consequently it was

considered a high honour to be selected.

In wartime everyone is liable from the age of 18, although for a time Donbas miners were exempt.

PROMOTION (a). N.C.O.s. In peacetime, the battalion commander had the responsibility of selecting promising men among the conscripts and inviting them, after one year in the ranks, to volunteer for training as N.C.O.s. Training lasted six months and the N.C.O.s then spent a further year in the army.

(b). Officers. Officers made the army their career. They were selected from the N.C.O.s, or more rarely rankers, or were secondary school students who chose a military career and received special schooling. Since the war special army cadet schools have been instituted.

CITIZEN RIGHTS. Every soldier has exactly the same rights as any other citizen. He has the vote, can be elected as a deputy to the Soviet.

PAY AND ALLOWANCES. The Russian soldier only gets pocket money, but we must remember that he has had little opportunity to spend money. He also gets shaving soap, cigarettes, etc., free and most big towns have a Red Army House where he can see plays, films, read, etc. All dependents (children under sixteen, if the mother is not working, and parents over 60) receive allowances. Special Family Funds make gifts to soldiers' families who also get vegetables from Victory Gardens free. Wives are encouraged to take their husband's jobs at the same rate of pay.

DEMOBILIZATION. The Red Army man has few worries about demobilisation, unless like so many, his town has been in the Nazi's path. Apart from anxiety about his family in such a case, he has no fear of getting a job. There were more jobs than men before the war and there will be still more after. Generous family allowances encourage him to marry and raise a family. When the Red Army man is disabled and discharged he receives a pension which must not be less than his civilian pay, whether he is working or not.

WOMEN IN THE RED ARMY. Although women in the Red Army have acted at times as frontline soldiers in this war, that is not their usual role. Women in the Red Army are front-line nurses and crawl over the battlefield after the advancing troops. A few also act as bomber and fighter pilots; many more in communications, as telephonists and wireless operators.

ATTITUDE TO GERMANS. The Russians hate the Germans, but believe that they can be taught shame and work out their own salvation. So the Red Army man scrupulously takes prisoners and observes the rules of warfare in captured German towns. He does not torture, loot or commit atrocities; but he intends to see that the Germans pay, just the same.



STARKE

"... and here is Professor Shagworthy, who is going to talk to us about ancient Egyptian civilisation."

★ ★ ★ Corny Corner ★ ★ ★

U.S. Military Policeman . . . "and remember, anything you say will be held against you."

Rookie: "Anything?"

M.P.: "Yes, anything."

Rookie, fervently: "Dotty Lamour, Dotty Lamour."

(2s. 6d. prize to June Abbott, Kettering.)

A man reeled out of the door of a pub, bumped into a lady, took off his hat with elaborate courtesy, and then stood staring.

"Well," asked the lady, irritated, "what are you staring at?"

"Madam!" said the cavalier, "you are the ugliest woman I have ever seen."

"And you," she snapped, "are the most drunken sot I've ever seen."

"True, madam," he replied. "But I'll be all right in the morning."

A career is O.K., but you can't run your hands through its hair.

Advert.: For sale, one green talking parrot. Owner no longer shares parrot's political opinions.

Sports Talking

by

F. W. Deards

NEXT week that grand old veteran Nel Tarleton is having his last fight. At least that is his announced intention, and since he is nearing 40 it seems likely that he will keep to the statement.

His last fight is going to be no cinch. Al Phillips is a lively enough customer for anyone to tackle and the feather-weight champion will need all his vast experience and boxing skill to retain his title and have the satisfaction of hanging up his gloves while still the best man at his weight in the country.

Nel has been fighting for nineteen years, and it's almost fifteen since he first won the title. That was on October 1, 1931, when he beat Johnny Cuthbert on points at Liver-

pool. Eleven months before he had drawn with the same fighter in his first title fight.

He lost his crown in the very next year to Seaman Watson, and it took him two years to get it back from the same fighter. This time he held on to it for just over two

years before being beaten by Johnny McGrory, again at Liverpool.

Incidentally, all Nel's title fights have been at Liverpool except the one against Dave

Crowley in December, 1934.

Four more years in the "wilderness" and then this grand boxer was back in the record books with a win over the title holder Johnny Cusick in 1940.

During the war he has defended the title only once—against Sergeant Tom Smith, whom he beat towards the end of 1940.

Now he is at the end of a long and honourable career. If he retains the title he wins also his second Lonsdale belt.

But Phillips is a young, aggressive fighter who is certainly capable of staying the full fifteen rounds. Against this Tarleton will match skill and experience. He doesn't punch hard enough to stop Phillips inside the distance, and fifteen rounds is a long, long way when a boxer has turned thirty-five.

My view is that Phillips is strong enough and young enough—the accent is on the word young—to take the title.

Haegg for America

SO America is to have another look at Gundar Haegg, the Swedish record breaker. Doubtless they would also have liked to see his compatriot Arne Anderson.

But Anderson apparently is not the travelling kind, so Haegg is making the trip with Haakon Lidman the Swedish hurdler.

Last time Haegg went to America high hopes were entertained that he might break his return journey long enough to allow himself to be matched with our own Sydney Wooderson. Such hopes proved fruitless, but it is impossible not to hope anew that this time we shall see him on the same track as Wooderson in this country.

Sydney will soon be past his peak period as a miler—if he isn't already.

Some time ago he was talking of taking up cross-country running. But for the chance of a crack at Haegg, I'm sure he would be only too pleased to change any plans he has already made.

And what an event that would be—even the pressmen would have to queue up for it.

Tars Ashore

THE Navy team which today is playing the Army at Ipswich is the strongest yet turned out by that service.

It includes five internationals, among whom is Brown, the Queen's Park amateur, who

made such a hit at Villa Park a fortnight ago.

The strength of the half-back line can be judged from the fact that Flewin, a front ranker in the race for the job of England's centre-half, is playing right-half, with Corbett the Scottish international in the middle berth.

Chief weakness seems to be in the attack which, on paper at least, is not up to the same high standard of the defence.

The Army eleven is obviously not the best they could turn out. That is except for the half-back line which being made up of Busby, Smith and Mercer is as good as any that could be fielded in the whole of the country.

They have also a nice trio of inside forwards in Hunt, Steele and Rowley.

The Army seem the stronger team all round and my vote is a fairly confident one for them to win.

"The Red Clydesider"

John McLean (A Fighter for Freedom), by the late Tom Bell. 5s.

THIS book gives a first hand insight into the most representative of the "Red Clydesiders" and embraces a period of twenty-five years of his life when he was training himself as a school teacher and giving his leisure time to the building of the working-class movement.

McLean was a real fighter. For instance, in one of his terms of imprisonment during the last war, he claimed and gained for himself the status of a political prisoner.

This was something unheard of in Scotland, for they used not to discriminate between political and other prisoners.

Another instance was the way he dealt with the judge in the High Court of Edinburgh. Before the sentence of five years' penal servitude was pronounced, he pointed to the judge, the late Lord Strathclyde and uttered in "a full-throated voice": "I am not here as the accused, I am here as the accuser."

These two striking incidents are sufficient to indicate the interest and lessons to be derived from Tom Bell's book.

The story of his early days makes a deep impression on the reader. The

struggles of his parents to give their family an adequate education. The sacrifice made by his mother in her widowhood by returning to work in the mill so that they could continue their studies.

It was the knowledge of the sacrifice made and self-denial endured by his mother and sisters that made him resolve to use his education in the service of the workers.

John McLean's appreciation of what constitutes Socialist propaganda is indicated by his publication of a pamphlet entitled "The Greenock Jungle," which gave the story of how diseased animals were passed out from the public slaughter house to the butchers of the East End.

This created such an outcry that the Local Government Board instituted an enquiry which afterwards resulted in much-needed supervision at the slaughter house.

This is a book that should not be missed by those in the Labour movement who desire to fortify themselves by the heroic examples of one of Scotland's pioneer Socialists whose name and worth will long be cherished as one having "fought the good fight."

HUGH HINCHELWOOD.

SPORTS PARADE



STANLEY CULLIS

In an era of "stopper" centre-halves Cullis stands supreme because of his ability to look after his forwards while carrying out to the full his job of holding up the middle.

He cost the Wolves nothing when they obtained his signature from Ellesmere Port in February, 1934. His first cap came in October, 1937 against Ireland, since when he has been the almost automatic choice of the English selectors.

He is now in Italy with the Army.

NOT ONLY HITLER SQUIRMS

by Pat Sloan

THE advance of the Red Army has brought hope and joy to hundreds of millions of peace-loving people throughout the world. You would expect it to make the Hitlerites squirm. But quite a lot of other people are squealing and squirming as well.

The other day, in a West End office lift, an elderly business man looked at his front-page headline, which was, of course, about the Red Army in Germany: "They couldn't have done it with our weather," he remarked to his companion!

Then Lord Kemsley's *Daily* for they do not have the

Sketch on the last day of January tried to belittle the Red Army's advances, in comparison to ours, by playing up the terrible hardships on the Western Front. There was a picture of a British soldier: "A shave—but no hot towel" was the caption!

The article then went on to argue that, in fact, the courage of the men on the Western Front was greater than that of the Red Army because they were advancing more slowly: "Indeed, the smaller the operation the more the men need to call on their courage,

mental stimulus of knowing that the operation is designed to smash through the enemy lines. . . ."

By which argument, of course, the Nazi army's advance backwards must be the most courageous operation of all. Quite in the Kemsley tradition!

Then the *Sunday Pictorial* of February 4 had a long story from the American correspondent, Harrison Salisbury, called *The Secret of the Red Army*. From it we learn that the Red Army "looks like a collection of all the junk peddlars in the world," that Stalin's Generals have ignored "all the rules of military organisation," that Soviet sentries are so dumb that if an order is given to them, "the only way to cancel the order is to put another sentry on the post," that the German Army "is better organised, better equipped than the Red Army," that Stalin has "abandoned all attempts to build 'a modern army,'" and that the Red Army has simply come through on badly organised courage.

I am the last to belittle the superb courage of the Red Army, but to say that it is courage, and nothing else, that has brought victory over the Germans is just piffle.

And why, today, all this piffle about the Red Army? Why are they all so keen to play it down?

The secret is, of course, that the Red Army is the only army in the world belonging to a Socialist State. Every admission that the Red Army is efficient is an admission that Socialism is efficient. Hence the eagerness of the old men in the lift, Lord Kemsley, and of the *Sunday Pictorial* and Mr. Salisbury to belittle it. And there will be lots more of them.

The Red Army makes Hitler squirm, it is up to us to make the Kemsleys squirm.

World's Workers Unite

"WE came to London to conference of the world's build." With those workers.

words Lombardo Toledano, idolised leader of Latin-American workers, described the serious purpose drawing the delegates of the working class of nearly fifty nations, to the World Trade Union Congress held in London over the last two weeks.

Out of this conference should grow a unity of the world's workers unprecedented in all previous history.

To give an illustration—three Presidents of the Congress represented respectively, Britain, U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. Yet but four years ago, the Soviet Trade Unions were completely excluded from the International Federation of Trade Unions and had never attended a really representative

Last week, their leader, Vassili Kutznetsov, a burly metallurgical engineer who resembles the late Wendell Willkie in appearance, was one of the best-liked members of the conference.

Said Kutznetsov: "We are united by the single aim of making everything possible to hasten the complete defeat of our common enemy—Hitlerite Germany. We must also discuss the post-war problems affecting the vital interests of the working class and pave the way for the active participation of the trade unions in their solution."

About 250 delegates attended the Congress. The largest delegation was the Soviet, with forty members, of whom about a quarter were women and a handful were in their twenties. Otherwise the conference was overwhelmingly masculine, and though virile enough, not very youthful.

A fuller report of the Congress will be included in next week's CHALLENGE.

M. T. F.

NEW FILMS

•THE MAN IN HALF MOON STREET, with Nils Asther and newcomer Helen Walker.

Paramount have toyed with the idea of a scientist who discovers life can be lengthened by the grafting of new glands on to old. When the picture starts he has lived 90 years and looks only 30. He wants to undergo a final operation which will ensure immortality, but he can't get anyone to do it, and dies of a heart attack.

The film answers no questions. The experiments die with the man, and that's that—nothing but horrors and a girl with a pretty figure.

Fawl: I wouldn't sit through it again for a fiver!

•••WOMAN IN THE WINDOW—with Edward G. Robinson and Joan Bennett. An excellent thriller.

M. A.

Adverts.

London Young Communist League

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